

Message Text

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ACTION CU-03

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 USIA-06 /020 W
----- 032377

R 271245Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000

INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SEDU, EG, US

SUBJECT: FULBRIGHT PROFESSORS

1. I HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO READ THE TERMINAL REPORTS OF THREE OF THE FULBRIGHT PROFESSORS WHO WERE IN EGYPT THIS PAST YEAR (LEWIS, BAKER AND FISCHER), AND HAVE ALSO HAD A LONG TALK WITH DR. CLINE, WHO WAS SENT OUT BY CU TO EXAMINE THE PROGRAM. A NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS EMERGED FROM TWO OF THOSE REPORTS, I.E., FACT THAT EGYPTIANS DID NOT USE SOME OF THE FULBRIGHTERS UNTIL DECEMBER (ALMOST THREE MONTHS AFTER THEY ARRIVED), INADEQUATE LOGISTIC SUPPORT ON THE PART OF HARRISON'S INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ASSOCIATES (IBA), ALLEGED EMBASSY INDIFFERENCE, LACK OF FPO FACILITIES, ETC. I HAVE BEEN DEEPLY CONCERNED WITH THE WELFARE OF THE FULBRIGHTERS, AND BELIEVE A FEW COMMENTS ARE IN ORDER.

(A) IT IS TRUE THAT EGYPTIAN UNIVERSITIES FAILED TO USE SOME OF THEM UNTIL DECEMBER, BUT IT WAS NOT ONLY FULBRIGHTERS WHO SUFFERED THIS EXPERIENCE. THEIR EGYPTIAN PROFESSORIAL COLLEAGUES, IN MOST INSTANCES, ALSO DID NOT BEGIN CLASSES UNTIL THAT TIME. THE DELAY IN BEGINNING CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION LAST OCTOBER WAS DUE TO A GOE ADMINISTRATIVE SNARL-UP. HOPEFULLY, THIS WILL NOT HAPPEN AGAIN, BUT THERE IS AGAIN TALK THAT UNIVERSITY CLASSES WILL NOT BEGIN
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THIS YEAR UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTIONS, I.E., LATE IN

OCTOBER.

(B) I HAVE TALKED WITH HARRISON ABOUT THE SERVICES PROVIDED. HE ACKNOWLEDGES THAT EVERYTHING DID NOT GO AS SMOOTHLY AS ALL OF US HAD HOPED WOULD BE THE CASE, BUT NOTED THAT--CONTRARY TO THE EMBASSY'S ADVICE--SOME OF THE FULBRIGHTERS WERE SENT OUT BEFORE QUARTERS COULD BE MADE READY FOR THEM. HARRISON INSISTS THAT HE DID EVERYTHING HE COULD TO ASSIST THE FULBRIGHTERS, BUT ALSO NOTES THAT SOME OF THEIR DEMANDS WERE UNREASONABLE. I HAVE EMPHASIZED TO HARRISON THE IMPORTANCE I ATTACH TO IMPROVING IBA'S LOGISTIC SUPPORT FOR THE UPCOMING FULBRIGHTERS. HE HAS ASSURED ME THAT HE WILL DO SO AND NOTES THAT SOME OF THE QUARTERS WHICH WERE NOT AVAILABLE LAST YEAR HAVE NOW BEEN TAKEN OVER AND WILL BE READY FOR THE PROFESSORS IN SEPTEMBER. THIS SHOULD HELP WITH THE NEW CROP, ALTHOUGH WE MAY HEAR THE CUSOMARY COMPLAINTS THAT SOME OF THEM DO NOT LIKE THEIR QUARTERS, OR THAT THERE ARE LEAKY FAUCETS AND OTHER PLUMBING PROBLEMS. THESE, I WISH TO STRESS, BEDEVIL ALL OF US IN CAIRO AND THE LACK OF GOOD LOCAL MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL IS A CONSTANT HEADACHE.

(C) I AM NOT AWARE OF EMBASSY INDIFFERENCE. ON THE CONTRARY, I HAVE HAD THE FULBRIGHTERS TO RECEPTIONS AT THE RESIDENCE, AND SO HAVE OTHER OFFICERS. AT NO TIME DID ANY OF THE FULBRIGHTERS COMPLAIN TO ME ABOUT EMBASSY INDIFFERENCE AND IT IS NOTED THAT PROFESSOR FISCHER EXPRESSES GRATITUDE FOR THE HELPFULNESS OF EMBASSY OFFICERS AND IBA PERSONNEL. I DO BELIEVE SOME OF THEM FELT THAT THE EMBASSY HAD AN OBLIGATION TO EXTEND MAJOR LOGISTIC SUPPORT, BUT THIS WE INDICATED FROM THE OUTSET WAS SIMPLY NOT FEASIBLE I REPEAT, HOWEVER, THAT THIS EMBASSY IS PREPARED TO BE OF ALL APPROPRIATE ASSISTANCE TO THE FULBRIGHTERS WITHIN THE LIMITS OF ITS CAPABILITY.

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(D) THE FPO PROBLEM IS A VEXING POINT. I PERSONALLY BELIEVE THAT FULBRIGHTERS SHOULD BE ACCORDED FPO PRIVILEGES, SINCE THEY ARE IN EFFECT USG CONTRACT EMPLOYEES FOR THE PERIOD OF THEIR YEAR HERE. THE LOCAL MAI LS ARE SO UNRELIABLE THAT LATE DELIVERY OR NON-DELIVERY ARE THE RULE RATHER THAN THE EXCEPTION. LETTERS AND PACKAGES ARE ROUTINELY LOST AND PILFERED. THIS CONSTITUTES A MAJOR MORALE PROBLEM WITH FULBRIGHTERS UNABLE TO COMMUNICATE SHORT OF FINDING SOMEONE TRAVELING TO OR FROM THE US WHO WILL CARRY THEIR MAIL. I RECOMMEND THAT THE DEPARTMENT WORK OUT AN ARRANGEMENT WITH DOD WHICH WOULD EXTEND FPO PRIVILEGES TO THE US PROFESSORS IN EGYPT DURING THEIR PERIOD OF SERVICE TO THE US GOVERNMENT.

(E) THERE HAVE ALSO BEEN SOME SUGGESTIONS OF EGYPTIAN INDIFFERENCE. OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT, FOR THOSE FULBRIGHTERS WHO SHOWED INTEREST IN AND EMPATHY FOR EGYPTIAN PROBLEMS, THEIR EGYPTIAN COUNTERPARTS RESPONDED WITH TYPICAL EGYPTIAN HOSPITALITY. AT LEAST TWO OF OUR PROFESSORS, UNFORTUNATELY, DID LITTLE TO MAKE THE EFFORT AND, NOT UNNATURALLY, THE EGYPTIAN RESPONSE WAS CORRESPONDINGLY TEPID. WE HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT, APART FROM ALEXANDRIA UNIVERSITY'S UNHAPPINESS WITH ONE OF THE TWO WHO WAS THERE (AND WHO HAS NOW LEFT), THE EGYPTIAN UNIVERSITIES APPRECIATED THE PRESENCE OF THE FULBRIGHTERS. THIS ASPECT OF THE SITUATION IS A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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REMINDER OF THE IMPORTANCE OF SELECTING THE RIGHT KIND OF PEOPLE FOR FULBRIGHT GRANTS TO EGYPT. THEY MUST NOT ONLY BE PROFESSIONALLY COMPETENT, BUT SHOULD ALSO HAVE THOSE QUALITIES OF TACT, UNDERSTANDING, HUMOR AND PATIENCE WHICH WORKING IN EGYPT REQUIRE.

2. DR. CLINE INDICATED THAT HE FOUND NO SHORT TERM ALTERNATIVE TO THE IBA CONTRACT EXCEPT PERHAPS THAT OF ASKING ARCE TO UNDERTAKE LOGISTIC SUPPORT. HE WOULD EVENTUALLY LIKE AGAIN TO SET UP A BINATIONAL

COMMISSION. AS DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL, WE EARLIER
EXPLORED ARCE'S CAPABILITY AND WILLINGNESS TO DO
SO AND FINALLY DISCARDED THIS ALTERNATIVE, SINCE
ARCE SIMPLY PROVIDES POSSIBLE ADDRESSES TO ITS
INCOMING SCHOLARS AND LEAVES IT UP TO THEM TO LOOK
AT THE QUARTERS AND MAKE ARRANGEMENTS. THIS WOULD
BE MUCH LESS THAN WHAT IBA IS PROVIDING. AS FOR
BINATIONAL COMMISSION, I HAVE VERY SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT
THIS. THE OVERHEAD IS TOO HIGH AND IT SIMPLY
ADDS MORE PEOPLE, CARS, ETC. STILL, IF IBA'S
SERVICES THIS COMING YEAR PRODUCES THE SAME ARRAY
OF COMPLAINTS, WE WILL HAVE TO LOOK FOR OTHER ALTERNATIVES.

3. IN SPEAKING TO LAST YEAR'S FULBRIGHTERS, AND
IN READING THEIR REPORTS, I COME AWAY WITH THE
DISTINCT IMPRESSION THT NONE OF THEM RECEIVED
A PROPER ORIENTATION ON EGYPT BEFORE DEPARTING
I GATHER SEVERAL DID NOT EVEN PASS THROUGH WASHINGTON.
I WOULD HOPE THAT THE COMING CROP OF FULBRIGHTERS
MIGHT BE GIVEN A FULL ORIENTATION AND WILL IN
ANY EVENT SEE TO IT THAT THEY RECEIVE ONE FROM US
AFTER THEIR ARRIVAL.
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